

CITY OF NEWARK

# Arts & Culture Annual Report

2020

CITY  
OF **NEWARK**  
Mayor Ras J. Baraka



# Newark is a City of the Arts!

Our city's arts and culture sector not only impacts and influences the everyday life of Newark residents and those that visit our great city each day, but it is an economic engine for the city. Each year, the sector generates approximately \$178 million in economic activity, roughly supports 5,000 jobs, and creates over \$7 million in revenue for our local government. Newark's arts sector is critical to our city's economy and neighborhood vitality and this became more evident as Newark experienced the health and economic effects of the COVID-19 global pandemic. Looking back on the recent public health crisis and calls for racial justice that forever changed our lives, we reflect on some of the city's accomplishments through the Division of Arts and Cultural Affairs during 2020.

One of the most significant accomplishments was the creation of the Creative Catalyst Fund (CCF) announced in January 2020 and designed to support individual artists, artist collectives and small to midsize arts organizations. The Fund was already in the works when the pandemic arrived, but the City streamlined and fast-tracked the CCF process and worked with our partner Newark Arts to allow for fast and flexible funds to support artists and institutions during this challenging time.

Our creative sector was hugely impacted and forever changed by COVID-19, leaving artists out of work, closing institutions, and limiting in-person experiences. As you will see in the testimonials on the following pages, the first year of CCF was hugely impactful on our arts community and our entire Newark community. This is only the beginning of how the arts can move Newark forward.

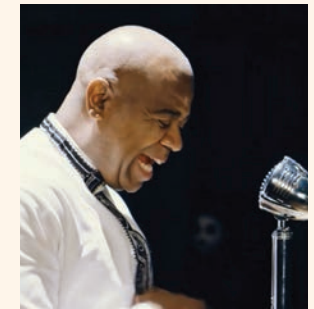
Moreover, following the protests and call to action surrounding the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, the City of Newark made a series of announcements to increase investment in social justice focused arts endeavors. The incredible initiatives outlined on the following pages show how the arts expand dialogue and engage the community around racial justice and equity, and they also transform the way we think about creatively and innovatively utilizing public space to achieve positive change.

In closing, a strategy to help Newark residents and businesses get through the coronavirus crisis wouldn't be complete without attention and support of the arts community and its health. Let us continue to work together to seek solutions that ensure fundamentally shared prosperity and opportunity in Newark. Again, thank you for your continued support in creating a greater Newark.

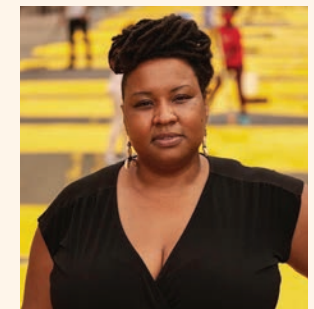
## Impact of COVID-19

All but 2 CCF applicants indicated some amount of monetary loss due to the COVID-19 crisis.

The total amount of monetary loss was estimated at just over **\$4.5 million**, with an average of **\$13,000 for artists** and **\$88,000 for organizations**.



MAYOR RAS BARAKA



FAYEMI SHAKUR

**“This city prides itself on its resilience, and its artists share in that spirit. Ever since the coronavirus arrived, Newark’s creative community has been on the front lines, responding to the crisis and, now, the catharsis.”**

– *New York Times*, “Newark Artists, Thriving Amid Crisis and Catharsis,” July 10, 2020



# Creative Catalyst Fund

In January 2020, Mayor Baraka announced that the City of Newark would launch its first arts grant program, designed to promote equitable financial support for Newark's arts sector by providing grants to artists and small and mid-sized nonprofits working in any artistic discipline.

The Creative Catalyst Fund (CCF) launched in April 2020, in the early part of the COVID-19 crisis that took an enormous financial toll on the creative sector.

CCF received 164 applications by the deadline of May 1.

The selection committee was comprised of community representatives, City staff and arts experts, and convened a rigorous yet expedited review process to allow for rapid distribution of funds in partnership with Newark Arts.

In June, CCF awarded a total of \$800,000 to 120 artists, art collectives and cultural organizations through two funding streams:

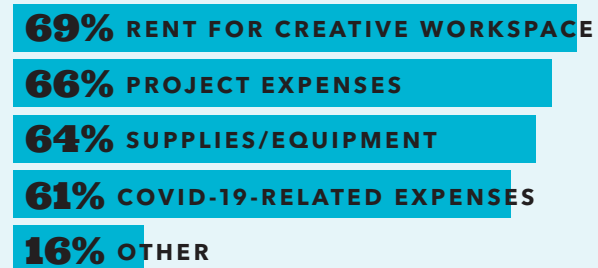
- **Artist Fellowships** – 72 artists and 15 collectives
- **General Operating Support** – 28 nonprofit organizations and 5 LLCs

In its first year, CCF was seeded by \$750,000 from the City of Newark and \$50,000 from the Community Foundation of New Jersey. The average award amount was \$10,700 for organizations and \$3,100 for artists. See page 13 for a list of 2020 grantees and jurors.

The Fund is a multi-year initiative providing up to \$1 million dollars annually for at least three years. In 2021, the City will provide \$750,000 with an additional \$50,000 from the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation.

Artist Kwesi O. Kwarteng

## Artist Fellowships Grantees



## General Operating Support Grantees

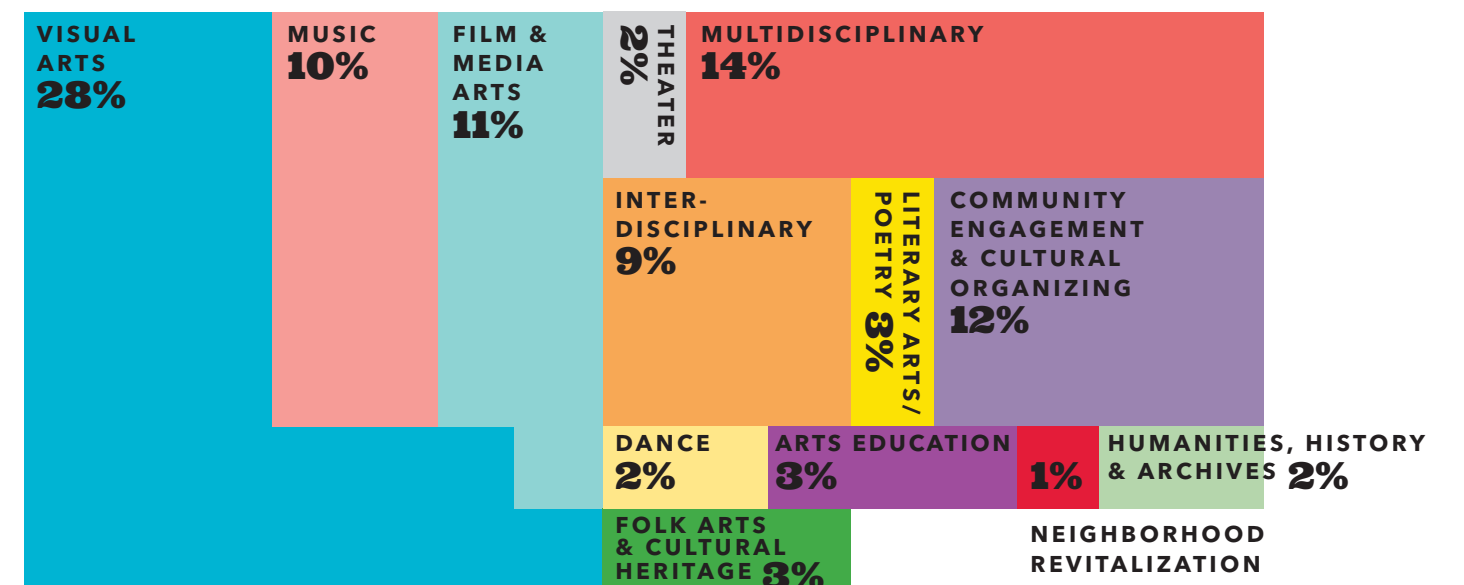


## How Grantees Used the Funds

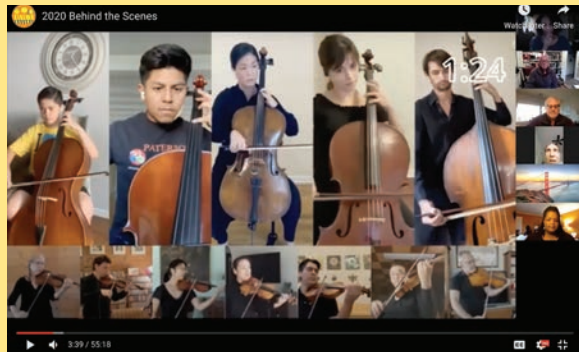
**“I used the funds to pay the rent for my studio where I create most of my work. That might not sound like much but it meant the world to me.”**

– Davynte Pannell  
Visual Artist

## Grantees by Artistic Discipline







**“The Creative Catalyst Fund was indeed a “catalyst” in the full sense of the word. Thanks to this grant, we were able to launch an online platform that opened up new opportunities for collaboration. Our online platform is here to stay.”**

– Keys 2 Success  
Music, East Ward

**“Newark has been very proactive and transparent about our city thriving as an arts scene and this Creative Catalyst Fund was a MAJOR confirmation of that.”**

– Broadway Blake  
Music, Central Ward

Right: Marly at ODR Studios



**“The Creative Catalyst Fund has impacted my life and my studio practice greatly during the pandemic. It has allowed me the time, space, and financial security to press forward with my creative practice, creating stability during uncertain times.”**

– Amanda Thackray  
Visual Arts, Central Ward



Above: Al-Munir LLC at the Agro Festival  
Right: Painting by Grace Lynne Haynes



**“The Creative Catalyst Fund has provided peace of mind in an uncertain time. It means everything to be supported as an artist and instructor by the city I’ve called home since childhood.”**

– Samantha Katehis  
Visual Arts, Central Ward



**“We are extremely proud and grateful to be in a city that values the arts, not only as the icing on the cake of community wellbeing, but as a meaningful slice of the cake itself.”**

– Barat Foundation  
Arts Education, Central Ward



# Public Art

The Neighborhood Mural Revitalization Program, which began in 2014, has created over 30 murals citywide.

In 2020, the City launched the Social Justice Public Art Initiative, starting with two ground murals in response to calls for racial justice. Seven murals were completed in 2020, and additional murals will be commissioned through 2021.

**“The convergence of art and protest is an age-old practice, especially pronounced in African-American culture. Poetry, music, graphic design, and public art are all public avenues to have our voices heard. Newark is a movement City as well as a City of artists.”**

– Mayor Ras Baraka



**“SOJOURNER TRUTH, FOUNDING MOTHER”  
BY GRACE LYNNE HAYNES**

Edison Place – exterior of Project for Empty Space at 800 Broad Street

**“WILL YOU BE MY MONUMENT”  
BY NEW ARTS JUSTICE IN  
COLLABORATION WITH FOUR  
CORNERS PUBLIC ARTS**

Treat Place between Branford Place and William Street



**“WHITNEY HOUSTON” BY  
MAUDE LEMAIRE, MODSAICA**

45 William Street in Teachers Village



**“THIS GUIDING LIGHT” BY LAYQA NUNA YAWAR**

McCarter Highway between Lafayette and Edison Place

**“RISE UP FALLEN SOLDIERS” BY MALCOLM ROLLING, YENDOR**

Crawford Street between Washington Street and Halsey Street in Newark's historic Lincoln Park



**“ALL BLACK LIVES MATTER”  
GROUND MURAL**

Halsey between Central and New Street



**“ABOLISH WHITE SUPREMACY”  
GROUND MURAL**

Martin Luther King Blvd between Springfield Avenue and Market Street

On a weekend in July 2020, two of Newark's busiest streets were painted with enormous messages promoting racial justice and equity. Nearly 300 students, artists, organizers, and residents helped paint the messages throughout the day in 2-hour socially-distanced shifts.



# Looking Forward



Akwaaba Gallery

## Art Space Leasing Initiative

In January 2020, the Mayor announced a new program to lease vacant city-owned spaces to arts organizations for \$1 per year. Stalled due to Covid, the program will launch in 2021, and three to five spaces will be leased per year, with the possibility of purchase after 5 years. A technical assistance program will be provided to candidate organizations to support their vision to create new arts spaces in Newark's neighborhoods.



Newark Symphony Hall

## Newark Symphony Hall

Mayor Baraka identified the Lincoln Park neighborhood and Newark Symphony Hall as a priority for economy-driven revitalization, in collaboration with the Lincoln Park Alliance. Newark Symphony Hall is a historic landmark venue in the neighborhood that has an artist-centered strategy to provide cultural programming and aid redevelopment efforts in the area. The Preserve New Jersey Historic Preservation Fund recommended the arts and entertainment venue for a \$750,000 grant to kickstart its three-phase, \$50M renovation to coincide with the institution's 100-year anniversary.

## Newark Community Museum and Center for Restorative Justice

In June 2020, concurrent with social unrest and calls for racial justice, Mayor Baraka announced that the City's First Police Precinct will be closed. The Precinct building, which has historic importance as the site of the 1967 rebellion, will be converted into a museum chronicling local activism and will also house the new Office of Violence Prevention. The museum's programming will be initially supported by the City's public safety budget and Office of Violence Prevention, with an anticipated opening in 2022.



The Police Precinct in 1967

## Harriet Tubman Monument

In October 2020, the City of Newark announced that it will install a new monument honoring Harriet Tubman and Newark's role in the Underground Railroad in downtown Washington Park, to replace the statue of Christopher Columbus that was removed last summer. The City will also rename Washington Park to Tubman Square in 2022 when the new monument will be installed. The heroic abolitionist made Newark an important stop on the Underground Railroad as she personally led enslaved Africans out of the South to freedom.



Harriet Tubman ca. 1868





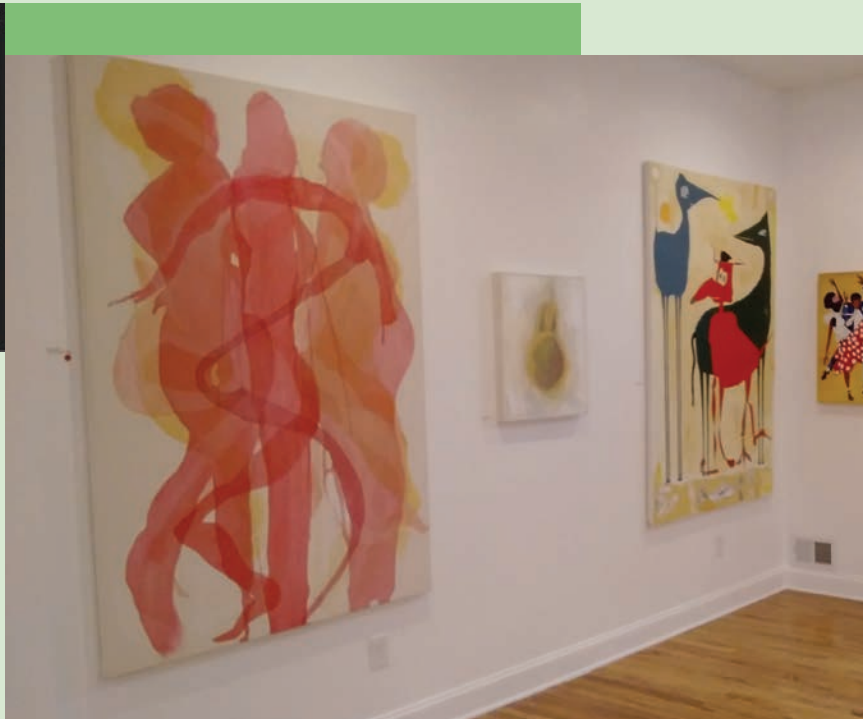
**“We know the impact arts organizations have upon the wellness and growth of this City and thank goodness, our leaders recognized this and RESPONDED with meaningful, impactful action.”**

– Newark Boys Chorus School  
Music, Central Ward



**“The \$3,500 grant provided much needed support to buy supplies and equipment for my film project.”**

– Celeste A. Bateman  
Film and Media Arts, South Ward



**“I know from speaking to others in the community, the CCF made a significant difference. For us, it kept our doors open and allowed us to create a virtual platform to continue to provide Arts to our community.”**

– Akwaaba Gallery  
Visual Arts, West Ward



Jasmine Graf, Paper artist



Above: Trilogy an Opera Company  
Below: Nork Photowalk, by Dolo Foto

**“The Catalyst Grant funding process was very streamlined and allowed for organizations to identify their needs in alignment with the ability to continue to impact the community during a time of uncertainty.”**

– Newark Science and Sustainability  
Interdisciplinary, Central Ward



**“With the help of the Catalyst Fund we were able to get live-streaming up and running by the beginning of May. The Creative Catalyst Fund gave me the belief that someone cared about the arts and our survival.”**

– School of the Garden State Ballet  
Dance, Central Ward





Creative Catalyst
Fund Grantees

ARTIST FELLOWSHIPS

360 Poetry Night with Justice	Jo-El Lopez
Akintola Hanif	Justin Dinspechin
Akwaaba Gallery	Kay the Kreator
Alfonse Pagano	Kevin Blythe Sampson
Amanda Thackray	Kevin Darmanie
Ammar Thomas	Khari Johnson-Ricks
Andrece Brady	Killa Kherk Cobain aka Unicorn
Angel Pelaez	Kwesi O. Kwarteng
Antoinette Montague	Layqa Nuna Yawar
Boshia Raejean	LeRon Lee
Braxton Cook	Manny Faces
Brazilian Cultural Center of Newark Events	Marylou & Jerome Bongiorno
Briana Robinson	Mashell Black
Broadway Blake	Matt Gosser
Cazorla & Saleme	Maurice Chestnut
Celeste A. Bateman	Mia X
Cement Gallery	MODSAICA
Cesar Melgar	NeliseNasheida
Charisa Dowe Rouse	Nene Aïssatou Diallo
Christen Clifford	Newark Women In Film c/o Angela Williamston
Ciko Tanik	Newark.FM
Daryl Stewart	Ngu Asongwed
Davynte Pannell	Nimi Hendrix – Secret Society Motion Pictures
Dolo Foto/Chrystofer Davis	Noelle Lorraine Williams
Dominique Duroseau	Noelle Park
Elijah Bell	ODR Studios
Elijah Minton	Off The Rock, LLC
EvoluCulture	Pamela Booker/Where’s Your Tree?/Eco-Arts
Gabriel Ribeiro	Pamela Council
GalleryRetail	Parkway North Productions
Geraluz	Patricia Dahlman
Grace Lynne Haynes	Pia Wilson
J. Read	Pink Dragon Artist Syndicate
Jasmine Graf	Prince Derek Doll
Jennifer Moore	Randy Haze
Jenny P. Scott	

Samantha Katehis
Shane “BYHAZE” Fuller
Spencer Fro
Tamara Remedios
Terence Dwight Grimsley
The Artist Recreates the World
The Honk-Tweet LLC
The Loud Project
TreZure Empire
Ursula Phillips
Vandalhaus Newark #LoveDimension
Victor L. Davson
Virgil Dorjo
Willie Cole
Zunyda Watson

GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT

Al-Munir LLC
All Stars Project of New Jersey
Artfront Galleries, NJ Non Profit Corporation
Artistic Passion and Purpose LLC
Barat Foundation
Butterfly Dreamz, Inc.
Cultural Integration and Arts Association
Dirty Soles Footwear Group
DreamPlay Media
EqualSpace
Four Corners Public Arts
Gallery Aferro
GlassRoots
Index Art Center
Institute of Jazz Studies

(Clement’s Place)
Ivy Hill Vailsburg Center for Arts Culture and Community Activism
Keys 2 Success, Inc.
Lincoln Park Coast Cultural District
New Arts Justice at Express Newark
Newark Boys Chorus School
Newark Print Shop
Newark School of the Arts, Inc.
Newark Science and Sustainability, Inc.
Newark Symphony Hall
Paul Robeson Galleries – Rutgers University
Project for Empty Space
School of the Garden State Ballet
Shine Portrait Studio
Spirit Performing Arts Inc.
The HUBB Arts & Trauma Center
The New Jersey Historical Society
Trilogy an Opera Company
Uniao dos Clubes Luso Americanos of New Jersey
Yendor, LLC

2020 Creative Catalyst Fund Selection Committee

Adrienne Wheeler, Artist/curator
Fayemi Shakur, City of Newark Division of Arts & Cultural Affairs
Gillian Sarjeant-Allen, Rising Tide Capital
Keith Hamilton, City of Newark Dept. of Economic & Housing Development
Kween Moore, artist/curator
Jeremy Johnson, Newark Arts
John Schreiber, NJPAC
Lauren Craig, Newark Arts
Rebecca Jampol, Project for Empty Space
Ronice Bruce, South Ward Special Improvement District
Susan Schear, ARTISIN
Sharnita Johnson, Dodge Foundation
Tanuja Dehne, Dodge Foundation
Vishnu Krishnan, City of Newark Dept. of Economic & Housing Development

Supporters

Community Foundation of New Jersey
Newark Arts
New Jersey State Council on the Arts
Prudential
The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation

Thank you

Thank you to David Andersson, Tracey Knuckles, Kate Levin, and Teresita Ortiz from Bloomberg Associates for their pro bono guidance and facilitation of our initiatives.

Thank you also to the members of our Municipal Council for their support of this work:

Mildred C. Crump (Council President and Council Member-at-Large)

Luis A. Quintana (Vice President and Council Member-at-Large)

Augusto Amador (East Ward)

Carlos M. Gonzalez (Council Member-at-Large)

John Sharpe James (South Ward)

Joseph A. McCallum, Jr. (West Ward)

LaMonica McIver (Central Ward)

Eddie Osborne (Council Member-at-Large)

Anibal Ramos, Jr. (North Ward)





**we love like we the sun  
at night**

**our fire what lights  
rainbows through blight**

**our plight a colorful  
ocean**

**our energy the water,  
the motion**

**beauty indoors**

**we call it love**

**we love like we the  
beginning**

**a blessing when power**

**breaks into healing**

**we love like we the future**

Excerpt from "Love poem for my city" by Mia X, Creative Catalyst  
Fund grantee

[www.newarknj.gov/departments/arts-and-cultural-affairs](http://www.newarknj.gov/departments/arts-and-cultural-affairs)

